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9 June 1954

MEMORANDUM FOR: The Director of Training

SUBJECT : Internal Chinese Language Training Program

REFERENCE : Memorandum of 27 April 1954 from the Director of Training, covering [REDACTED] 25X1A
Memorandum, same subject

1. The report prepared 22 April 1954 by [REDACTED] on the above subject has been read with considerable interest by the FE Division, particularly by FE [REDACTED]. The problem of obtaining or creating qualified Chinese language officers has represented a major obstacle [REDACTED]

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2. In any discussion of training, it is important to keep in mind the viewpoint of the operating branch. To wit, that the branch is charged with day to day responsibilities of maintaining and directing its operations and support mechanisms and must honor this responsibility while attempting to fulfill all training requirements. With requirements of career service boards, of senior staffs, and of the branch, it is, from a practical standpoint, impossible to determine that one particular course is more important or more required than another. T/Os are approved on the basis of job descriptions necessary to fulfill the branch responsibilities; unfortunately, such job descriptions cannot, at least at this time, include training of any kind. Therefore, every individual who is assigned as a trainee is, in effect, turning back on his share of the branch responsibility which share must be borne by one of his fellow workers.

3. It is interesting to note the Office of Training's acceptance for the failure of the program headed by [REDACTED]. In retrospect, it might prove valuable to examine the validity of that program from the date of its inception. The following points are offered for consideration:

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a. Is it actually possible to teach sufficient Chinese to be of operational value in thirty weeks? The Division has serious

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reservations. The alternative would be one of the two year courses offered by universities or government agencies such as the Foreign Service Institute.

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b. Would it not have been wise, when it appeared within a few weeks after the start of each of [REDACTED] three courses that they were doomed for failure because of a lack of interest and a paucity of students, to have contacted the consumers to explore the cause for failure and to develop a solution? With all due respect to [REDACTED] his only contact with FE, [REDACTED] the branch primarily concerned, was to discuss the possibility of an operational assignment overseas with that branch.

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c. Can an operating branch afford to dissipate its strength by assigning slotted personnel to language, or any other course, at the expense of its day to day work load? Statistics prepared by FE, [REDACTED] for the period 1 March to 1 May 1954, which is believed to be an average period, show that 52 persons assigned to FE, [REDACTED] participated in 21 Agency training courses (not including language; three persons were [REDACTED] totaling 315 man-weeks. Of these 52, twenty had regularly assigned duties at headquarters and 32 were either on TDY from the field or were preparing to go to the field in the immediate future. Based on the T/O, more than ten percent of headquarters personnel and slightly under ten percent of the field personnel are constantly undergoing Agency training at headquarters. While these percentages are believed to be low as compared with the individuals who should be taking specialized training of different types, the fact remains that even the ten percent loss from regular duties places an unbelievable burden on the branch.

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d. Would it be presumptuous to assume that in the subject courses the Office of Training, and now the consumer, established the criteria and determined the supposed need? Referring back to (b) above and also to the fact that courses such as this are generally announced by memorandum only, without consultation with the consumer, it would appear most likely that this assumption is well founded.

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4. The FE Division concurs with the first and second recommendations on page two of [REDACTED] memorandum. The third cannot be accepted; an individual cannot be "commanded" to learn, nor can an operating branch be "commanded" to provide students if such will jeopardize carrying out the basic responsibilities assigned to that branch.

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5. In addition to [REDACTED] two recommendations with which we concur, we offer two additional suggestions:

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a. That the Office of Training again try to work out an arrangement whereby certain trainees can be cleared from the operating branch T/Os and placed on an OTR T/O for the duration of the training period.

b. That greater emphasis be given to promoting night or weekend courses. It is believed that the relative success of the self study programs is due largely to the fact that students can avail themselves of these facilities before or after the regular working day.

c. That OTR, the career service boards and the senior staffs work out a coordinated schedule of courses that will enable persons on TDY from the field to headquarters to complete the required courses with a minimum delay. Under present conditions it is quite possible that a person required to take three courses before returning to the field may be delayed as much as two months, there are many instances of a month's delay, due to the fact that there is upwards of a week lapse between the end of one course and the beginning of another, and also because the person may be crowded out of one class and have to wait until the next. While the branches try to assign trainees desk duties during these periods, this is a very inefficient procedure and, furthermore, the field station is depending on the person to return to his regular duties without delay.

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